

MacArthur Making Good His Promise to Filipinos

By RUSSELL BRINES
(AP Correspondent formerly in the Orient, who was captured by the Japanese in Manila)

MacArthur is keeping his promise.

A gaunt line of resolute men was stretched across the jungles of Bataan, holding a conqueror at bay . . .

White-faced men and women crouched in the musty tunnels of Corregidor, while day and night the earth rumbled and trembled from bombs and artillery . . .

Triumphant Japanese were looting Manila, with a heavy hand for the Filipinos and a superior grin for interned Occidental men, women and children.

Two thousand miles away Gen. Douglas MacArthur gravely spoke to other frightened but still free civilians.

"The President of the United States," he said, "has ordered me to break through the Japanese lines and proceed from Corregidor to Australia for the purpose, as I understand it, of organizing an American offensive against Japan. The primary purpose of this is the relief of the Philippines.

"I came through and I shall return."

This was March 17, 1942. The general and his family had completed a perilous flight from the Philippines, slipping through the Nipponese naval blockade in a P-T boat.

Japanese hordes were pouring like lava across the mountains and valleys of New Guinea; reaching out toward northern Australia, which their planes and ships already had struck.

The general did not say, "first, I shall save Australia," as his sense of diplomacy might have prompted. He did not qualify the remoteness of his pledge. He spoke from an intense preoccupation which has dominated most of his utterances since then.

Douglas MacArthur wanted to return to the Philippines as a strategist; as a friend, and to redeem a debt of honor.

So intense was his faith that Australia, and gradually the rest of the democratic world, took heart. His erect, square-jawed figure became a symbol of the distant power that some day would dispel the mists then hanging over Asia.

This commander of a doomed army began to form a new striking force with the material at hand—one combat division and a handful of bombers and fighters. Men with courage and daring under him curled back the Japanese menace in the Papuan jungles and the Solomon Islands.

Australians honored MacArthur many times as the savior of their commonwealth. On one such



GEN. DOUGLAS MACARTHUR
... He Drove By Land



ADM. CHESTER NIMITZ
... He Drove By Sea

occasion this year, the general deliberately reiterated his pledge to return to the Philippines.

"On such occasion as this," he added, "my thoughts go back to those men who went on their last crusade in the jungle thicknesses to the north where they made the fight that saved this continent."

He was speaking of Bataan, as he did often. He noted the first anniversary of the peninsula's fall, April 4, 1943, with a prepared statement that outlined some of the reasons for his impatience to return:

"Our flag lies crumpled . . . The wrecks of what were once our men and women groan and sweat in prison toil; our faithful Filipino wards, 16,000,000 souls, gasp in the slavery of a conquering soldiery . . ."

"I was the leader of that lost cause," he added, "and, from the bottom of a seared and stricken heart, I pray that a merciful God may not delay too long their redemption, that the day of salvation be not so far removed that they perish, that it be not again too late."

The general acquired sympathy and confidence in the Filipinos from his father, Lt. Gen. Arthur MacArthur, first American military governor of the Philippines. He had participated against Filipino patriots during the insurrection.

Douglas MacArthur began his military career as a lieutenant of engineers in the archipelago in 1903. He later served as district commander in Manila and as commander of the department of the Philippines.

In 1935 he began to groom a Commonwealth army for the island's forthcoming independence. As Field Marshal he directed in-

tensive training of Filipino conscripts.

The general also consistently viewed the Philippines as a great strategic stepping stone, both as a springboard for a jump to China and as the base of sea and aerial power which could sever Japanese communication lines to the war material regions of the south.

Gen. MacArthur's impatience to return to the islands was reflected in his efforts to shave down the New Guinea timetable. He utilized air power to the fullest. He developed leap-frog landings which trapped whole Japanese armies and permitted advances without the slow liquidation of more than 100,000 Japanese still living within the areas he controls.

Finally, after 17 months of back-breaking effort, he inserted in his communique of July 23, 1944, the first mention of the

Philippines since the capitulation of Corregidor, May 6, 1942. He revealed then that long-range planes from newly-acquired bases were maintaining a constant patrol over southern Philippine waters.

Doubtless that moment brought back memories which must have plagued him often during the past two years . . . the towering flames which destroyed the Cavite naval base, symbol of American Far Eastern naval power, the night he slipped from Manila . . . the concentrated hell of Corregidor and Bataan when his diseased-weakened men prayed for help that never came . . . the gaunt, night-cloaked shadows of the islands, hunched like compliant shoulders, as his tiny escape boat weaved toward Australia.

Gen. MacArthur has a rendezvous with ghosts in the Philippines.

Until the Spaniards found that the avocado was edible and introduced it into many of their colonies, it was grown only as an ornamental tree.

MISS MELBA CALL AND MR. KING WED

In the presence of 35 friends Miss Melba Call was married to Eugene King, before the fireplace in the parlor of the University Congregational Church, in Seattle recently, the Rev. Clinton Ostrander, officiating.

The bride, an Eskimo, who has been blind since babyhood, is a graduate of the State School for the Blind at Vancouver, Wash., and of Eastern Washington College of Education. She has taught the blind in Alaska, Washington and New Mexico.

Her husband is an Alaskan Indian, and a graduate of the Sheldon Jackson School at Sitka. He worked in Juneau until he lost his sight two years ago.

They are at home at the Lennox Apartments in Seattle—(Contributed).

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